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STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
STATE BOARD OF DENTISTRY

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF

**CHRISTINE TUNNICLIFFE, R.D.H.**  
License # HI 007772

TO PRACTICE DENTAL HYGIENE  
IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Administrative Action

**CONSENT ORDER IMPOSING  
IMPOSING RESTRICTIONS  
ON LICENSE TO PRACTICE  
DENTAL HYGIENE**

This matter was initially opened to the State Board of Dentistry upon receipt of information that Christine Tunnicliffe ("Ms. Tunnicliffe" or "respondent"), had been dismissed from her employment at University of Pennsylvania Health System in or about November 14, 2007, following its investigation into allegations that she had obtained prescription pads from that facility and used those prescription blanks to obtain controlled dangerous substances for personal use. Information available to the Board also revealed

that on or about November 15, 2007, respondent was arrested in Brooklawn, New Jersey, and charged with acquiring or obtaining and possession of controlled dangerous substances by misrepresentation, fraud, forgery, deception, or subterfuge, on more than one hundred occasions during the period early 2007 through the date of her arrest. Those charges have been transferred to the Camden County Prosecutor's Office. Additionally, the Board received information that respondent has had prior arrests and convictions related to drugs and drug paraphernalia.

Ms. Tunncliffe has provided information that since her discharge from the University of Pennsylvania Health System in 2007, she has undergone treatment for her addiction and has been compliant with her recovery program. She is being monitored by the Physicians' Health Program in the State of Pennsylvania.

The Board has considered this information and has determined that Ms. Tunncliffe's continued, unrestricted practice as a registered dental hygienist is not appropriate at this time. While she appears to be in early recovery, her history of arrests for possession of controlled dangerous substances and drug paraphernalia dating back to 2004 and the pending criminal charges related to acquiring or obtaining and possession of controlled dangerous substances by misrepresentation, fraud, forgery, deception, or subterfuge, are of grave concern to the Board whose responsibility includes ensuring its licensees are able to practice dental hygiene with reasonable skill and safety.

The Board has determined that with the restrictions set forth in this consent order, respondent may continue to practice dental hygiene in the State of New Jersey. Respondent must continue to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board that she is actively participating in a drug treatment program, is undergoing continued counseling,

attending AA/NA meetings, and submitting to weekly urine screens with results being negative for psychoactive substances. In addition, she must notify her employer of the restrictions on her license and her employer must agree to notify the Board of any indication that respondent is impaired or otherwise unable to practice with reasonable skill and safety. Any deviation from the terms of this consent order, however, will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or revocation of respondent's license to practice.

THEREFORE, IT IS ON THIS 5<sup>th</sup> DAY OF December, 2008,

CONSENTED AND ORDERED THAT:

1. Christine Tunncliffe, R.D.H., may only practice dental hygiene in this State under the terms of this consent order. Ms. Tunncliffe shall notify her employer(s) of the entry of this consent order.

2. Respondent shall abstain from the use of alcohol and controlled dangerous substances and shall not possess any controlled dangerous substances except pursuant to a bona fide prescription written by a physician or dentist for good medical or dental cause in her own treatment. In addition, respondent shall advise any and all treating physicians and/or dentists of her history of substance abuse. Respondent shall cause any physician or dentist who prescribes medication which is a controlled dangerous substance to provide a written report to the Board together with patient records indicating the need for such medication. Such report shall be provided to the Board no later than two (2) days subsequent to the prescription in order to avoid confusion which may be caused by a confirmed positive urine test as a result of such medication. Information shall be forwarded

to Jonathan Eisenmenger, Executive Director, State Board of Dentistry, P.O. Box 45005, 124 Halsey Street, Newark, New Jersey 07101.

3. Pending further order of the Board, respondent shall enroll in the Professional Assistance Program ("PAP") and comply with the recommendations for treatment. Respondent, at a minimum, shall have face-to-face contact with representatives from that program as directed by the PAP, shall attend support groups, including NA or AA as directed by the PAP, and shall submit to urine monitoring as set forth in paragraph 4 below. Respondent shall provide evidence of attendance at NA/AA groups directly to the Board. If respondent discontinues participation with the PAP or attendance at any support group without obtaining approval of the Board and the PAP, she shall be deemed in violation of this Order.

4. (a) Until further order of the Board, respondent shall submit to random urine sampling a minimum of once a week at a laboratory facility as directed by the PAP. The urine testing requirement shall continue until further order of the Board expressly reducing or discontinuing testing. Respondent shall be provided with specific directions for the protocol of the testing procedure and the location of the laboratory facility by the PAP. The urine monitoring shall be conducted with direct witnessing of the taking of the samples as designed by the laboratory facility. The initial urine screen shall utilize appropriate screening techniques and all confirming tests and/or secondary tests will be performed by gas/chromatography/mass spectrometry (G.C./M.S.). The testing procedure shall include a forensic chain of custody protocol to ensure sample integrity and to provide documentation in the event of a legal challenge.

(b) All test results shall be provided to Jonathan Eisenmenger, Executive Director of the Board, or his designee in the event he is unavailable. The Board also will retain sole discretion to modify the manner of testing in the event technical developments or individual requirements indicate that a different methodology or approach is required in order to guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the testing.

(c) Any failure by respondent to submit or provide a urine sample within twenty-four (24) hours of a request will be deemed to be equivalent to a confirmed positive urine test. In the event respondent is unable to appear for a scheduled urine test or provide a urine sample due to illness or other impossibility, consent to waive that day's test must be secured from the PAP. Personnel at the lab facility shall not be authorized to waive a urine test. In addition, respondent must provide the Board with written substantiation of her inability to appear for a test within two (2) days, e.g., a physician's report attesting that she was so ill that she was unable to provide the urine sample or appear for the test. "Impossibility" as used in this provision shall mean an obstacle beyond the control of respondent that is so insurmountable or that makes appearance for the test or provision of the urine sample so infeasible that a reasonable person would not withhold consent to waive the test on that day.

(d.) In the event respondent will be out of the State for any reason, the PAP shall be so advised so that arrangements may be made at the PAP's discretion for alternate testing.

(e.) Any urine test result showing creatinine levels below 20 mg/dL and a specific gravity below 1.003 shall be deemed a confirmed positive urine test.

(f.) Respondent shall familiarize herself with all foods, food additives or other products (such as poppy seeds) which may affect the validity of urine screens, be presumed to possess that knowledge, and shall refrain from the use of such substances. Ingestion of such substances shall not be an acceptable reason for a positive urine screen and/or failure to comply with the urine monitoring program.

(g.) The Board may, in its sole discretion, modify the frequency of testing or method of testing during the monitoring period.

5. Respondent shall provide any and all releases to any and all parties who are participating in a monitoring, treatment, or other program as outlined in this order, as may be required in order that all reports, records, and other pertinent information may be provided to the Board in a timely manner. Any information received by the Board regarding respondent's treatment or participation in a monitoring program may be used in connection with any proceedings pertaining to her license.

6. Nothing in this order shall be deemed to preclude the Board from taking any further action it deems appropriate based on respondent's conduct, including but not limited to the conduct underlying the criminal charges referred to in this consent order, should the Board's review of information cause it to determine that such action is warranted.

7. Respondent shall provide the Board with reports from each and every mental health professional (including but not limited to: psychologists, counselors, therapists, psychiatrists) who have participated/are participating in respondent's care and/or treatment,

and from the PAP detailing the nature and extent of her involvement with that entity and its recommendation for reinstatement of her license;

8. Entry of this Consent Order is without prejudice to further action by this Board or other law enforcement entities resulting from respondent's conduct.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF DENTISTRY

By: Alexander Hall, D.M.D. *Alexander Hall DMD*  
President

I have read and I understand the terms of this order and agree to be bound by it. I consent to the entry of this Order.

Christine Tunncliffe, R.D.H. *11-21-08*  
Date

I Consent to the entry of this order as to form.

Ron Helmer, Esq. *11/25/08*  
Date

I have read the terms of this order and agree on behalf of the Professional Assistance Program to comply with its terms as pertaining to the PAP.

Louis E. Baxter, Sr., M.D. *11/25/08*  
Date  
Executive Medical Director  
Professional Assistance Program

and from the PAP detailing the nature and extent of her involvement with that entity and its recommendation for reinstatement of her license;

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NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF DENTISTRY

By: Alexander Hall, D.M.D.  
Alexander Hall, D.M.D.  
President

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Christine Tunnicliffe, R.D.H. 11-21-08  
Christine Tunnicliffe, R.D.H. Date

I Consent to the entry of this order as to form.

Ron Helmer, Esq. 11/25/08  
Ron Helmer, Esq. Date

I have read the terms of this order and agree on behalf of the Professional Assistance Program to comply with its terms as pertaining to the PAP.

Louis E. Baxter, Sr., M.D. 12/8/08  
Louis E. Baxter, Sr., M.D. Date  
Executive Medical Director  
Professional Assistance Program